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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to develop a comprehensive system for recording enrollment and accomplishment information about Adult Basic Education (ABE) students for use in preparing state and federal reports. Project goals were: (1) to develop a systematic program of individualized instruments and procedures for functional data gathering on instructional programming and progress of ABE students; (2) to develop a systematic program for maintaining contact with former ABE students; and (3) to analyze the differences, impact, and ultimate benefits of the information system with the development of a hard-copy information system or a computer based information system. Project activities included the analysis of existing information systems at three schools, determination of data needed and development of data collection procedures, pilot testing, program dissemination, and evaluation. ABE directors, coordinators, instructors, and students supplied evaluative input. The Advisory Committee determined that the first two program goals were met. The third goal was partially accomplished (by development of a standard hard-copy information system). Appended are six instruments designed to facilitate ABE student assessment, ABE program assessment, and data collection necessary for local, state, and federal reports. (MN)

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Iowa Professional Development Program
for Adult Educators
College for Continuing Education
Drake University

Final Report

of

The Development of a Comprehensive Information System for Assessing the Progress and Follow-up Service of ABE Students and Former Students

Prepared by

Douglas H. Smith, Coordinator

The project reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant from the Iowa Department of Public Instruction. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the State of Iowa, Department of Public Instruction, and no official endorsement by the Department should be inferred.

Project No. 04.

CE 026 552

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The Development of a Comprehensive Information System for Assessing the Progress and Follow-up Service of ABE Students and Former Students

I. Statement of the Problem

Although each area school adult basic education program has developed its own system for recording and maintaining enrollments and determining the formal accomplishments of ABE students, collectively the systems do not gather any information that is becoming very important, both for required state and federal reports or to identify the progress of the ABE student. Presently, little is recorded beyond intake demographic data, courses/programs in which the student enrolls, some record of attendance, and in-out program notation or the last date the learner attended if they did not complete the program. These are done to meet the requirements of the area school to document attendance.

There is insufficient information, however, on entry educational level or needs, the personal objectives of the ABE student, the learning activities the person carries out, competencies that were gained, and follow-up to determine accomplishments after leaving the program. Further, there is little uniformity in the procedures and forms used in order to assure the thoroughness of the record keeping and monitoring process by all area colleges.

It was the general purpose of this project to address these concerns by (1) developing a systematic program of data gathering and record keeping

that could be used both as a monitor of the educational progress of the ABE student and provide the required data for local and state reports; (2) develop a set of useable assessment and monitoring tools for determining the initial educational levels, desired learning objectives, instructional programs and progress and competencies gained by the ABE students; (3) develop a system of periodic follow-up of both those completing the program and those leaving before completion to determine the success of the ABE program and maintain contact with the ABE student; (4) develop a system that has the potential for record keeping through the use of electronic data (computer) equipment.

The basic emphasis of the project was the development of a functional instructional information system for the ABE/GED program for three co-sponsoring area schools. The existing systems of these schools will be reviewed. This will be followed by determining the desired data for facilitating and monitoring the progress of the ABE student and developing a comprehensive system utilizing existing and desired procedures.

The ultimate target population, the ABE student, will not know anything about this for about another year, except those fifty or so students who participated in a pilot testing of these instruments. Thus, the persons involved in this year's study were the members of the Advisory Committee, listed in the appendix, and the ABE instructors and students that participated in the three month pilot or trial testing of the instruments.

To summarize the need for this project through extensive discussion with ABE supervisors and coordinators, the present difficulty in maintaining adequate records of the ABE student's progress and knowledge of skills gained, and having a functional follow-up system to determine the ultimate

impact of the program became evident. The problem has become particularly accute with the requirement by the U.S. Office of Education, now Department of Education, to develop and document more comprehensively the programming and progress of all ABE students. Hence, the need is both immediate and long-term in scope and application.

II. Goals and objectives of the Project

The Project was guided by three basic goals:

1. Devise a systematic program of individualized instruments and procedures to carry out functional data gathering, and instructional programming and progress of the ABE learner.

2. Devise a systematic program of maintaining contact with ABE learners who complete the program or leave before completion.

3. Analyze the differences, impact and ultimate benefits of the instructional information and follow-up system, as stated in the first two objectives, with the development of a standard (hard-copy) information system or or a computer based information system.

These three goals were the basis for the following five program objectives. Following each objective are the project activities carried out in order that the objectives be achieved.

1. Analyze the existing systems of the co-sponsoring colleges and identify other functional systems that may be considered in the principle areas of intake assessment, developing personal goals and functional learning objectives, and implementing an individualized educational plan.

Project Activities. The initial activity was the formation of a comprehensive Advisory Committee consisting of adult education directors, ABE coordinators/supervisors and ABE instructors from the three co-sponsoring area schools: Iowa Western Community

College, Western Iowa Tech Community College and Northwest Iowa Technical College. Meetings were held with the initial purpose of determining more clearly the existing information and record keeping system each school had developed. The areas of similarity and differences were noted. From this process it was determined that the three schools had developed good intake assessment instruments. They had also developed some informal records of the student's progress. Little had been done in developing a formalized follow-up system.

2. Determine the basic data desired and develop the necessary procedures for collecting the data. The instruments should be designed to collect information that is needed by the institution for their analysis and state reports, and what is needed by the ABE student to more effectively determine her/his learning progress.

Project Activities. From the initial activity described above in the first objective, a comprehensive list of all needed data was developed. This list was then typed with copies being returned to the Advisory Committee asking them to indicate if, after a more careful review, the item is needed, should be deleted, or could be combined with another item(s).

The length of the list itself prompted careful review, as there were eighty-five specific data items in the original list. The Advisory Committee individually reviewed each data item and then came together to compile a composite list. From this list the instruments were then designed.

3. Pilot test the ultimate instruments and procedures with co-sponsoring colleges and revise if necessary.

Project Activities. The instruments were designed and, after another meeting with the Advisory Committee to examine and edit the instruments, copies were made and distributed to twelve ABE instructors, about four instructors from each area school. Although directions and instructions had not been written up at this time, as much direction and guidance was given as possible with the request that they evaluate the ease or difficulty they and the ABE students have in completing these forms.

From late February through early May, 1980, the five instruments were administered to the ABE students the twelve instructors were working with. From this trial run the instruments were then revised for submission to a statewide Advisory Committee for implementation across the state, the purpose of the FY 1981 Project.

4. Disseminate to other area colleges the instruments and procedures that evolved out of the project for their consideration and possible use.

Project Activities. About midway through this project, two events occurred which altered this operational objective. First, the U.S. Department of Education issued a new set of guidelines and data being requested to document the expenditures of the funds from the Adult Education Act. These new guidelines were carefully reviewed to be sure that the instruments being developed in this

project would coincide with what was needed by the Department of Education. Second, the Adult Education Section of the Iowa Department of Public Instruction, being prompted by the new guidelines from DOE decided to use these instruments as a basis for standardized statewide instruments. Thus, it was decided that dissemination to the other area schools would be more comprehensive and would require another project for FY 1981.

5. Determine with the Advisory Committee the feasibility of maintaining the new information system upon a standard record keeping system, i.e., a "hard copy" system, and/or develop a computer based record keeping system.

Project Activities. This objective was periodically considered throughout the year. Some initial feasibility studies were conducted by the project director. There were discussions with the Advisory Committee and also discussions with consultants from Drake University's DIAL Computer Center. In sum, from these analyses and discussions it was determined that emphasis should be directed this year on developing useable instruments and, when finally printed, the instruments should be designed and coded for possible transferring of the data to a computerized system. There presently is no standardized computer system. Thus, to implement a computerized system will be considered and actively pursued in the FY 1981 Project.

III. Evaluation

The evaluation component of this project consisted of three activities. First, an Advisory Committee consisting of adult education directors, ABE coordinators/supervisors, and ABE instructors were selected to serve in both an advisory and evaluator position as a means of developing adequate instruments and procedures. The Advisory Committee developed criteria which were used for the development of the instruments and during the pilot process (February - May, 1980). The criteria included such questions as: What information is needed by the ABE learner, the area college and the statewide central office? How will this information be gathered? Who will gather the information? How will the progress of the ABE student be given back to her/him? How can the ABE student who has left the program be effectively, and economically contacted. Each of these questions were addressed in the trial run with substantive information being gathered which will further help the development of the final instruments and process, which is to be done this coming year.

The second evaluation activity was the utilization of ABE students to both evaluate the present ABE information system at co-sponsoring colleges and also identify what information they would like to receive while participating in the program in regards to their educational progress. This was carried out during the pilot testing in which the ABE students were asked to critique the completion of the instruments. Although not as fully carried out as desired, the follow-up instruments were sent to a few ABE students with minimal response. It was noted, however, that there historically has been some difficulty in gathering follow-up information.

The third evaluative activity was to be an evaluation by an outside evaluator. This activity was not carried out as this year was considered to be a developmental phase for a statewide use of the instruments which is to be implemented in FY 1981. The instruments were carefully reviewed, however, by each of the three co-sponsoring area schools. Further, copies were given to the other ABE coordinators/supervisors who responded quite favorably to both the format and process that was being implemented. Most were anxious to move into a statewide dissemination for use in their respective area schools.

IV. Summary

It is the opinion of the director and Advisory Committee that two of the three basic goals of this project were successfully accomplished. The third goal was partially accomplished, namely the development of a standard hard-copy information system. Consideration of a computer based information system was not possible because of emphasis given to developing the instruments, and the present lack of a coordinated computer based system.

The instruments developed meet all the initial criteria presented in the original proposal. In addition, the new data guidelines from the Department of Education were also carefully reviewed and specific items were included. Therefore, the six instruments or forms collectively provide (1) the necessary information to facilitate the ABE student's initial assessment and progress, (2) the availability of evaluative information for the local area college to assess their ABE program, and

(3) collect the necessary data for local, state and federal information and report requirements.

The success of this project is largely the result of substantial interest and commitment by a number of individuals. Particular note should be given to the Advisory Committee who spent long, often tedious, hours identifying information that is needed and carefully analyzing each and every item in order to answer the two basic questions, "Is this information really needed," and "Even if it is needed, will the teacher or student give us the information?" The pilot test largely verified that most of the forms were well designed. Those not being fully completed were redesigned and it is up to the statewide Advisory Committee in next year's project to determine the validity of these revisions.

In sum, a great deal of appreciation is given first to the Advisory Committee and then to the teachers and students who participated in the pilot testing of these instruments. The end-product of this project is something that, hopefully, will be a substantive contribution to the on-going improvement of the state's adult basic education program.

Appendix

310 Project Advisory Committee

The Intake, Progress and Follow-up
Instruments Developed in This Project

310 Project

The Development of a Comprehensive Information System
for Assessing the Progress and Follow-up Services
of ABE Students and Former Students

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REGISTRATION FORM

ol:_____ Date:_____

y are some questions for you to answer. If you do not know the answer to a question
o not want to answer it, then just leave it blank.

Name_____ Social Security No._____
Last Name First Name Middle Name

Address_____
House Number, Name or Number of Street, Box or Apartment Number.

_____ State_____ Zip Code_____

Phone Number_____ Phone Number where you work_____

on to Contact in Case of Emergency. Name:_____ Phone:_____

Are: Male_____ Female_____ Your Age_____ Date of Birth_____

Are: Married_____ Divorced_____ Widowed_____ Separated_____ Single___

Are: Black_____ White_____ American Indian_____ Pacific Islander_____

Alaskan Native_____ Spanish/Hispanic_____ Asian_____

Other_____
Please write in ethnic origin if different

---

ass: _____ Time: From_____To_____ Day (Circle One):

te: _____ Teacher (s) _____ S M T W Th F S

STUDENT INTAKE QUESTIONS

ol:_____ Date:_____

w are some questions for you to answer. If you do not know the answer to a question o not want to answer it, then just leave it blank.

Name_____ Social Security No._____
Last Name First Name Middle Name

Address_____
House Number, Name or Number of Street, Box or Apartment Number.

_____ State_____ Zip Code_____

Phone Number_____ Phone Number where you work_____

on to Contact in Case of Emergency. Name:_____ Phone:_____

Are: Male_____ Female_____ Your Age_____ Date of Birth_____

Are: Married_____ Divorced_____ Widowed_____ Separated_____ Single____

Are: Black_____ White_____ American Indian_____ Pacific Islander_____

Alaskan Native_____ Spanish/Hispanic_____ Asian_____

Other_____
Please write in ethnic origin if different

lass: _____ Time: From_____To_____ Day (Circle One):

ite: _____ Teacher (s) _____ S M T W Th F S

at name would you like us to use? _____

y are you here? (reason for contacting this program): _____

_____

w did you find out about this program? _____

ucational Information

The last school you attended:_____

City and State of that school:_____

The last grade you completed:_____ Month and year you left school:_____

y did you leave school:_____

d any of the following in your family not finish school:

Father_____, Mother_____, Brothers_____, Sisters_____

at are the most important reasons for your returning to school?

Improve job situation _____ Help children with school work _____

Earn high school diploma _____ Learn to read and write _____

General self improvement _____ Improve knowledge of English _____

To get a job _____ Meet interesting people _____

Other: _____

rk Experience

What is your present job? Title: _____

Where do you work: Place of Work: _____

City and State: _____

Work schedule or hours: _____

Have you received any job training: yes _____ no _____

If yes, briefly describe: _____

Other work experience (briefly summarize) _____

_____

Adding up all your income from a year ago until now, you received:

_____Up to $5,000 _____Up to $15,000 _____Up to $25,000

_____Up to $10,000 _____Up to $20,000 _____$25,000 and over

_____I did not receive any income

rsonal Data

How many children do you have? _____ Ages: _____

Are you receiving services/aid from any program or agency? yes_____ no_____

If yes, please name the programs/agencies: _____

_____

What do you do in your spare time? _____

It would help us if we knew if you are experiencing problems that may hinder your participation and progress in this program.

Child care problems: _____

Financial concerns: _____

Physical handicap: _____

Work problems: _____

Other problems: _____

TEACHER INTAKE QUESTIONS

l: _____ Date: _____

are some questions for you to answer. If you do not know the answer to a question not want to answer it, then just leave it blank.

Name _____ Social Security No. _____
Last Name First Name Middle Name

Address _____
House Number, Name or Number of Street, Box or Apartment Number.

_____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ Phone Number where you work _____

on to Contact in Case of Emergency. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Are: Male _____ Female _____ Your Age _____ Date of Birth _____

Are: Married _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____ Separated _____ Single ____

Are: Black _____ White _____ American Indian _____ Pacific Islander _____

Alaskan Native _____ Spanish/Hispanic _____ Asian _____

Other _____
Please write in ethnic origin if different

---

ass: _____ Time: From _____ To _____ Day (Circle One):

te: _____ Teacher (s) _____ S M T W Th F S

ter the person has completed the Registration Form, please carry out the following terview and questions. The following is presented in a conversational format to cilitate your asking the questions and determining present levels of proficiency. ch questions is preceded with a suggested statement on what to say.

ort Term Goals
at are the areas you would like to receive instruction in?

___ Reading _____ Mathematics _____ Shopping
___ Writing _____ GED Preparation _____ Health/Nutrition
___ Spelling _____ Job Application/Interviews _____ Social/Political Issues
___ Speaking _____ Personal/Family Budget

Other _____

d you bring any of these four forms:

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Permission from parent/guardian	_____	_____	_____
Permission from school	_____	_____	_____
Transcript	_____	_____	_____
Release form for transcript	_____	_____	_____

ng Term Goals

at do you want to do after completing the program?

Employment Goals: _____

Educational Goals: _____

Personal Goals: _____

Other Goals: _____

uld you like to talk with a guidance counselor about these goals?: _____ yes _____ no

sessment of Present Learning Levels

READING: Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

LANGUAGE: Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

MATH/COMPUTATION:

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

OTHER TESTS:

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

Date Tested _____ Test Used _____ Score _____

Comments: _____

_____

e following information is needed for various reports. Either ask the person about y of the following or determine this during the interview, and check off:

_____Iowa resident

_____Non-resident of Iowa

_____Resident in urban area (over 10,000)

_____Resident in rural area (under 10,000)

_____Immigrant (from another country)

_____Migrant (mobile agricultural worker)

_____Displaced homemaker (sudden breadwinner)

_____Institutionalized (resident)

_____Senior citizen (over 62 years)

_____Non-English speaking

_____Some English: _____speaking

_____reading _____writing

Language used in home: _____

PROGRAM PLAN AND PROGRESS RECORD

Page____ of ____

hool: _____ Date: _____

rson's Name: _____ Day (s) of Class: _____ Time: _____

cial Security #: _____ Teacher (s): _____

nning te	Objectives and Assignments	Evaluation and Comments	Date of Completion

...nning ...te	Objectives and Assignments	Evaluation and Comments	Date of Completion

STUDENT PROGRESS EVALUATION

School: _____ Date: _____

Your Name: _____ Social Security #: _____

It would help us if you would answer the following questions as fully as possible. If you do not understand any questions, just ask any of the staff and they will be glad to help you.

1. Are you getting enough information about how well you are doing in class?

   _____Yes, I have received enough information.

   _____No, I have not received enough information.

2. How well are you doing in class?

   _____I am doing ok.

   _____I am not doing as well as I would like.

3. What have you learned in class that has helped you:

   _____Reading
   _____Writing
   _____Spelling
   _____Speaking
   _____Mathematics
   _____GED Preparation
   _____Job Applications/Interviews
   _____Personal/Family Budget
   _____Shopping
   _____Health/Nutrition
   _____Social/Political Issues
   Other: _____

4. I would like more help in:

   _____Reading
   _____Writing
   _____Spelling
   _____Speaking
   _____Mathematics
   _____GED Preparation
   _____Job Applications/Interviews
   _____Personal/Family Budget
   _____Shopping
   _____Health/Nutrition
   _____Social/Political Issues
   Other: _____

5. What does the teacher do that helps you?

_____Answers my questions

_____Asks me questions

_____Helps me in correcting my lessons and work

_____Encourages discussion of problems important to me

_____Provides time for practice and drill

Other: _____

6. Check if any of these are annoying to you:

_____Students entering late or returning to class

_____Can't get help when I need it

_____Some students too far ahead

_____Others too far behind

_____Materials are uninteresting

_____Too many rules

_____Teacher is not fair or friendly

_____Teacher is not clear

_____Class goes too fast

_____Class goes too slow

_____Other students not friendly

Are there other things wrong with the class: _____

_____

7. Is is clear to you how long you will take to reach your educational goals through the program?

_____Yes, it is clear to me.

_____No, it is not clear to me how long it will take.

8. Please list below any other comments, reactions or suggestions you have about your program.

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR INSTRUCTOR OR COORDINATOR.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS EVALUATION.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

School: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

ity, State: _____

Telephone: _____

Name of Person: _____ Social Security #: _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Program you attended: _____

Dates of attendance in this program: _____

You participated in the learning program listed above. We try to reach everyone attending the program to get your thoughts, reactions and suggestions about the program and how to make it better. Your answering the questions as fully as possible will help us in our evaluation.

1. What are your current activities?

   Place of employment: _____

   Job Title: _____

   Further education: _____

   _____

   Not working outside of the home _____

2. Has the learning gained in this program helped in this activity?

   _____It helped very much.

   _____It helped a little.

   _____It was no help at all.

3. The General Educational Development (GED) Tests you have taken are:

Test	Date	Score
Writing Skills	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Reading Skills	_____	_____
Math	_____	_____

We hope you will come in soon to complete your testing. Call if you have any questions.

4. If you left before completing the program, why did you leave?

_____Employment conflicts with program attendance

_____Lack of study skills

_____Needed individualized instruction

_____Was progressing to slowly

_____Inability to read or write English fluently

_____Family responsibilities

_____Health problems

_____Instruction too difficult

_____Instructional staff (doesn't motivate participant)

_____Lack of counseling services

_____Inconvenience of the days and/or times class(es)/instruction is offered

_____Location of classes (too far to travel)

_____Location of classes in community (safety factors)

_____Courses or activities irrelevant to student's needs or interest; instruction not helpful

_____Lack of child care services

_____Lack of access to transportation

_____Lack of job training referral service

Other: _____

Were there any problems in the class that caused you to stop attending? Please explain.

_____

_____

_____

5. How else can we serve you through our area school? _____

_____

_____

_____

We want to thank you for your participation in the program and for completing this questionnaire. Please return it in the enclosed envelope.

Remember if you have any questions, if you need any help you believe we can provide, if you know anyone else you feel we should contact regarding this program, just give us a call at the number given at the top of this questionnaire.